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librarian to procure and compile in suitable and convenient form, for ready reference and access, information on current and pending legislation in other states and countries to the end that any member of the general assembly or any citizen of the state may have the benefit of such service. When so requested, he is required to aid members of the general assembly in the preparation and formulation of bills.

For a complete list of legislative reference departments, *See* POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW, May, 1910, p. 218.

Municipal Charter Revision—Memphis. Memphis has experienced some difficulty in securing a new charter. In 1907 the legislature passed a charter or charter amendment providing for the commission form of government, but the measure was declared unconstitutional, seemingly on a technicality. Apparently not to be thwarted, the legislature was appealed to and another act was secured. Memphis thus joins the ranks of those cities which are trying to secure efficient government by resorting to small governing bodies. Thus far Memphis is the largest city which has adopted the commission form, having a population of over 130,000, and the experiment there will no doubt be watched all the more closely by the larger cities where changes are being contemplated. The mayor under the new charter was elected last November, but in order to avoid the danger of having the measure declared unconstitutional, the four members of the legislative council whose terms do not expire until November, 1911, are made members of the board of commissioners. The people will not have an opportunity, therefore, to elect the full commission until 1911.

All the powers now exercised by the present legislative council, the fire and police commissioners, and the board of public works are to be exercised by the commissioners, together with additional powers conferred by the new charter. The mayor is made head of the department of public affairs and health, but the other four commissioners are to be assigned to be the heads of the following departments: department of fire and police, department of streets, bridges and sewers, department of accounts, finances and revenue, department of public utilities, grounds and buildings.

The scope of the several departments is stated quite at length, the various departments of the city government being placed under the jurisdiction of the appropriate commissioner. For example, the commissioner of public utilities has control of all affairs connected with street railways, gas and electric light companies, etc. The commissioners must

meet at least once a week and all the meetings must be public. No officer or subordinate officer of the city shall be interested in any way in any contract with the city.

The commissioners are given power to require the attendance of witnesses, the production of books, papers and documents, and to take and hear testimony concerning any matter pending before them. This would seem to confer very broad powers, for it would apparently include any matter of legislation, such as the granting of any franchise, etc.

Aside from the creation of the board of commissioners, the most important provision related to civil service. Within ninety days after organization, the commissioners must elect a civil service commission consisting of three members, each to serve for three years, though a method is provided whereby one shall be elected every year. It requires a vote of four commissioners to remove a member of the civil service commission, and such removal must be for cause. Examinations are to be held to determine the qualifications of applicants for positions under the city government, but such examinations must be practical and solely for the purpose of testing the fitness of the persons examined to discharge the duties of the position to which they seek to be appointed. The commission is required to furnish, as soon as possible after the examinations, to the board of commissioners double the number of persons necessary to fill the vacancies, the persons standing highest in the examinations for the positions to be certified. All vacancies which occur, that come under civil service regulations, prior to the next regular examination, must be filled from the certified list.

All persons appointed under civil service examinations are subject to removal by the board of commissioners or by the commissioner of the particular department for misconduct or failure to perform their duties. The chief of police, chief of fire department, superintendent of health, or any superintendent or foreman in charge of municipal work may peremptorily suspend or discharge any subordinate for neglect of duty or disobedience of orders, but must within twenty-four hours report in writing such suspension or discharge and the reason therefor to the commissioner in charge of his department who must affirm or revoke such discharge or suspension according to the facts. An appeal to the board of commissioners, however, from this ruling may be taken within five days by either party.

Any commissioner may cause the civil service commission to examine any employee or employees in his department to determine his fitness and qualifications to fill his position. The result of such examination

must be reported to the commissioner who requested the examination and he must retain or discharge the employee or employees according to the results of the examination. This seems to be an unusual feature, since it is seldom if ever found in any of the civil service laws.

There is a provision requiring all franchise ordinances to be published in a daily paper at least three times, each of said publications to be on the day prior to the meeting at which each passage of the ordinance occurs.

Memphis has not followed the more recent charters in regard to the initiative and referendum, but has incorporated a provision for the recall of elective officials. A petition signed by qualified voters equal to 25 per cent of the vote cast for mayor at the last preceding election makes it incumbent on the board of commissioners to order and fix a date for holding the recall election. The election must take place not less than thirty nor more than forty-five days from the certification of the city clerk that the petition is sufficient. The officer sought to be removed shall be regarded as a candidate for reelection unless he requests otherwise in writing. The recall cannot be invoked against any official until he has held office for three months, nor can he again be subjected to a second recall before six months after the first. The revised charter went into effect January 1, 1910.

Municipal Charter Revision—Buffalo. Buffalo is considering the question of revising her charter, or rather of securing a new one. In November, 1908, the people, under authority of what is known as the public opinion ordinance, voted for a new, simplified, home rule charter. To carry out the will of the people as expressed at the poll, the Referendum League caused to be drafted a proposed charter which was submitted to the people in November, 1909. Buffalo, like most eastern cities, has no power to adopt its own charter but can only let the legislature know what it desires. That was the purpose of the election in November. In order to get the proposed charter before the people under the public opinion ordinance, over 4000 voters had to sign a petition to that effect.

The charter as drafted by the Referendum League was approved by the Civic Conference of Buffalo, the Builders Exchange, the West Side Business Men's Association, the Black Rock Business Men's Association, the Referendum League, and the committee of 100 citizens representing every ward of the city. The Civic Conference was composed of the representatives of most of the civic and business organizations